

Remarks

Claims 57-65 remain in the present application for the Examiner's review and consideration. Claims 1-56 were previously canceled.

The Examiner rejects claims 57 and 62-65 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Adams *et al.* (U.S. Pub. No. 2005/0074643). The Examiner also rejects claims 57, 62, and 65 under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) and 102(e) as being anticipated by Lawrence *et al.* (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/097522).

Independent claim 57 has been amended to now recite that step (iii) comprises "securing the inner liner and valve to the outer casing," and that in step (iv) the valve is attached "by heat" to the outer casing. Support can be found in the originally filed application at FIG. 4 (reproduced below) and on page 10, ln. 8-14.

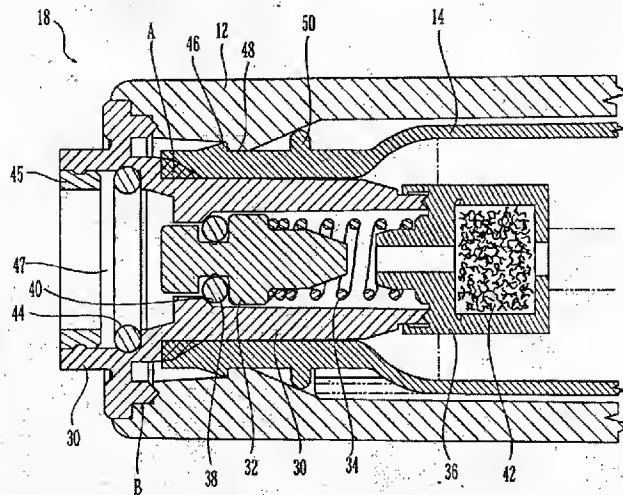


Fig. 4

Further support for the amendment to step (iv) can also be found on page 10, ln. 15-27, and especially at ln. 19-21 wherein it is stated:

A combination of applied force, surface friction, and intermolecular friction at the mating surface between the parts to be joined elevates the temperature until the melting points of the materials are reached.

(emphasis added).

Independent claim 57 is patentable over Adams *et al.*, because the reference does not disclose a method for sealing a fuel supply wherein the valve is attached by heat to the outer casing. Rather, the Adams *et al.* reference only discloses that two halves 164 of an outer casing are welded to a neck region 166 of inner liner 46 as shown in FIG. 11 below. It does not disclose that the outer casing is also welded to valve 36. In another embodiment of the Adams *et al.* reference, as shown in FIG. 3A below, valve 36 comprises two external flanges 51 that straddle endwall 50 to secure valve 36 in place, but, again, there is no indication that valve 36 is attached by heat to endwall 50. Moreover, in this embodiment, inner liner 46 is not secured to the outer casing, as required by step (iii) of claim 57. Accordingly, Adams *et al.* does not disclose each and every element of claim 57, and therefore does not anticipate claim 57 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e).

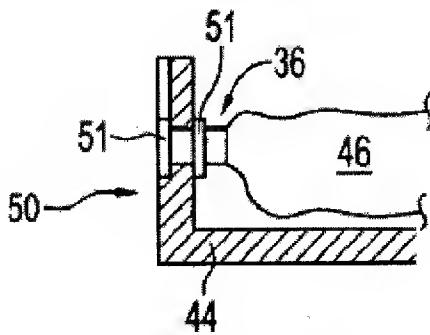


FIG. 3A

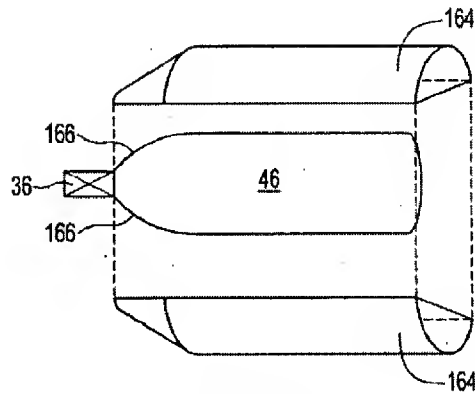
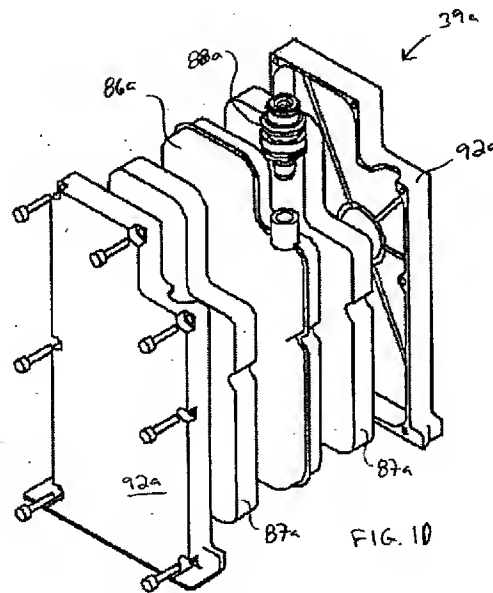


FIG. 11

Applicants would also like to note that independent claim 57 may not be rejected as being obvious in view of Adams *et al.* Both 35 U.S.C. § 103(c)(1) and MPEP § 706.02(l)(2) disqualify the Adams reference as an obviousness reference, because the Adams reference and the claimed invention were commonly owned or subject to a common assignment at the time the claimed invention was made. More particularly, at the time the claimed invention was made, both the Adams reference and the claimed invention were subject to an obligation of assignment to Société BIC, and both have been so assigned. These assignments were recorded at reel/frame no. 014949/0565 and at reel/frame no. 015295/0192, respectively. Thus, the Adams *et al.* reference is disqualified as an obviousness reference.

Independent claim 57 is also patentable over Lawrence *et al.*, because the reference does not disclose a method for sealing a fuel supply comprising the step of securing the inner liner and valve to the outer casing, and the step of attaching the valve by heat to the outer casing. Rather, the Lawrence *et al.* reference discloses a fuel cartridge 39a comprising canister 92a that encloses a pair of expandable pressure members 87a, which enclose an expandable fuel bladder 86a that is in fluid communication with sealable exit port 88a, as shown in FIG. 10 below. In other words, contrary to claim 57, expandable fuel bladder 86a and exit port 88a are not secured to canister 92a, but are sandwiched between expandable pressure members 87a. Moreover, exit port 88a appears to be attached only to expandable fuel bladder 86a, and there is no indication that it is also attached to canister 92a by heat as in the claimed invention.



For all the reasons above, independent claim 57 is patentable over the Adams *et al.* and Lawrence *et al.* references. Because claims 62-65 depend on allowable independent claim 57 and add further limitations thereto, they are patentable over Adams *et al.* for that reason alone. Similarly, because claims 62 and 65 depend on allowable independent claim 57, they are patentable over Lawrence *et al.* for that reason alone. The Applicants reserve the right to further support the patentability of these dependent claims should that become necessary.

Claims 58-59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lawrence *et al.* in view of Dabney *et al.* (U.S. Pat. No. 3,795,558). Claims 60-61 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lawrence *et al.* in view of de Pous *et al.* (U.S. Pat. No. 6,021,930). Claims 63-64 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lawrence *et al.* in view of Hobbs (U.S. Pat. No. 5,244,615).

Claims 58-59, 60-61, and 63-64 all depend upon allowable independent claim 57 and add further limitations thereto, and therefore are patentable at least for that reason alone. Moreover, the secondary references of Dabney *et al.*, de Pous *et al.* and Hobbs do not overcome the deficiencies of Lawrence *et al.* as stated above. Applicants reserve the right to further support the patentability of these dependent claims, should that become necessary.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested. All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Applicants believe that no fees or extensions of time are due in connection with the submission of this Response. However, if any required fee is due, the Commissioner may charge appropriate fees to The H.T. Than Law Group, Deposit Account No. 50-1980, and if any extension of time is required, it is hereby petitioned for under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136.

Respectfully submitted,

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